TL 1097-2

Are We Going to Profit from the East Timor Holocaust?

An Open Letter to the Prime Minister

Dear Mr Hawke/Peacock,

We, the undersigned citizens, who are deeply concerned about the situation in East Timor, many of us being refugees from East Timor, wish to express **our strong opposition to the recently signed Timor Gap Treaty** under which Australia plans to exploit East Timor's oil and natural gas resources.

This Treaty which divides between Australia and Indonesia the rich oil and natural gas resources that belong to the people of East Timor is a **blatant violation** of both the letter and the spirit of International Law.

The people of East Timor continue to suffer horrendous human rights violations at the hands of the Indonesian military, probably the worst of any people since World War 2, and **we deeply resent** the statement by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [1] that

> *there is no binding legal obligation not to recognise the acquisition of territory acquired by force,*

which is not only plain hypocrisy but also contemptuous of the United Nations General Assembly which has declared unanimously [2] (including Australia's vote!) that

> *no territorial acquisition or special advantage resulting from aggression shall be recognised as lawful.*

In our opinion the Timor Gap Treaty represents **the division of stolen property** between Australia and Indonesia. Instead of proceeding with the conclusion of the Treaty, we ask you to use your influence with the Suharto regime to facilitate an orderly decolonisation of East Timor under UN supervision so that the exploitation of East Timor's resources may take place **in collaboration with the rightful owners** of those resources - should the people of East Timor so desire.

Yours sincerely ... *SIGNATURES*

[1] Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade, *Timor Gap Zone of Cooperation Treaty*, Doc. 4953L, 1990.
[2] United Nations General Assembly, *Definition of Aggression*, Resolution No. 3314, 1974.

This advertisement will appear in major Australian newspapers on 18 April 1990.

EAST TIMOR FOUNDATION

GPO Box 2583 • Canberra ACT 2601 • Australia • Tel.: +61 - 6 - 247 7962 • Fax: +61 - 6 - 268 8581

The East Timor Foundation is a non-profit organisation with the following objectives:

- to provide education on and to increase public awareness of East Timor, its geography, history, languages, culture and politics;
- to contribute to the relief of poverty, distress and suffering in East Timor.
- to support East Timorese refugees; and
- to liaise with and to support other organisations which have similar aims.

The Foundation is supported by individual and institutional sponsors who contribute an annual sponsorship fee and by donations.

The Inaugural Management Committee of the Foundation comprises:

- Dr Michael Wagner (Chairperson), a senior lecturer in computer science at the University of New South Wales and the Australian Defence Force Academy;
- Dr Ken Fry, a historian at the Australian National University, former Member of Parliament and long-standing human rights supporter;
- Patricia Fuary, a secondary and adult-education teacher and Secretary of the East Timor Information Office;
- Paul Matters, the Secretary of the South Coast Trades and Labour Council; and
- Robert Wesley-Smith, an agricultural scientist with the Northern Territory Government.

Projects which are currently supported by the Foundation include the East Timor Information Office which, under the directorship of an East Timorese representative, gathers and distributes information on current events in East Timor. Within its means, the Foundation will also support representations on behalf of East Timor in international forums and research projects on topics of East Timorese geography, history, languages, culture and politics.

We invite you to support the objectives of the East Timor Foundation by becoming a sponsor of the Foundation. Please fill in the return slip below and return with your cheque. You will then be invoiced at the beginning of each year for the annual sponsorship fee. You may terminate your sponsorship for any reason and at any time by giving notice to the Foundation.

I wish to sponsor the East Timor Foundation. Please find enclosed my annual sponsorship fee of A$36 (individual sponsor), A$24 (student/unemployed/pensioner) or A$360 (institutional sponsor). Any additional donation is welcome.

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Please write your cheque in Australian Dollars and make it payable to the East Timor Foundation, GPO Box 2583, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia.